3: Redlich S-3 (no date) 1936 EG1 Albania

Public Instruction

WE often read in books appearing from the pen of persons who never have been in Albania nor taken the trouble to study the question, that the Albanians are illiterate and have no schools, but we can easily prove the exact opposite to be the truth.

Among Albanian statesmen, officials and individuals, we find graduates from the Universities of Brown (Providence), Cambridge, Constantinople (Robert's College), Harvard, London, Oxford, Paris, Vienna, and other celebrated centers of learning.

National law in Albania makes education compulsory through the elementary schools, thereby putting knowledge within the reach of every child.

Education in Albania has been nationalized by law passed in Parliament and sanctioned by the King of the Albanians and all institutions of learning are placed under the control of the Minister of Public Instructions. By the same law all private schools have been

871 abolished and were replaced by schools created by the government.

The law suppressing the private schools had become a necessity. Of course these private schools filled a beneficial purpose, for prior to 1920 the system of education was in a chaotic state. Foreign societies and organizations, interested politically or religiously, came into the country and established private schools. These served a need there is no question, but, in a country with three different religions like in Albania, the aims of such private schools did not coincide with any national views although they were open to all Albanian people equally. At first, these schools were only primary, but gradually they broadened into secondary grades. It is obvious that such schools, operated by independent capital and interests, would be hard to control—impossible to make any definite system of education. Finally, by the above-mentioned law passed unanimously by the Albanian Parliament, the education and instruction of all Albanian people became the exclusive right of the State. Primary instruction became compulsory and given gratuitously. This law became effective in the fall of 1933.

Thus, out of chaos, order has been established.

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

by 1,100 teachers in these primary schools. 000

At the present time the number of advanced 873
schools stands at twenty, six of which are 874
gymnasiums and five are pedagogic institutions. Among these are to be found commercial, technical, agricultural and domestic science schools. In the latter school alone there are over 3,000 students in attendance. All of these advanced schools make the knowledge of two foreign languages compulsory.

Here the elementary school and gymnasium 873
of the Franciscan Fathers is worthy of spe- 872
cial mention, which is one of the oldest educational institutions in Albania.

Also the Gymnasium of the Jesuits, with which is maintained an affiliated Theological Seminary, is another of the well established and progressive institutions.

There are a large number of kindergartens scattered throughout the entire country.

All these schools, elementary, normal, ad- 871
vanced, are conducted in the Albanian language.

The years 1933 and 1934 proved to be years of great and beneficial reconstruction of the educational system in Albania on a permanent and broader basis.

871 Scholarships are paid by the Albanian Government. However, if the winners of these scholarships be of rich parentage, they pass the financial part of the scholarship to the next deserving and needy pupil.

For the past few years the king and the government have been encouraging and financially assisting Albanian students to take courses, as well as graduate work, in foreign colleges and universities. Thus, we find several hundred Albanian students in the colleges and universities of various countries every year. To-day there are Albanian students in American, Austrian, Canadian, English, Egyptian, French, German, Indian, Swiss and Turkish colleges and universities, and such students receive the necessary financial wherewithal from the king personally and/or from the Albanian Government.

874 For the past ten years there have been in Kavaja, Albania, farm schools for boys and girls, which were established by Dr. C. Telford Erickson, and were taken over in 1930 by the Near East Foundation. These two schools were moved to a new location on ground contributed by the Albanian Government on the coast of the Adriatic midway

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

the sound upbuilding of the Albanian citizen of to-morrow. 575 - 883

Prior to the establishment of the National Union of Albanian Youth, King Zog I introduced and made obligatory the Boy-Scout system for boys between the ages of 12 and 18.

There is naturally great need for more schools, especially colleges, and the Albanian Government is continually improving on the existing educational system and new schools are opened as the budget and conditions permit. 871

It can be truthfully stated that the present educational system in Albania is of a high standard.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

197 great measure to the profession of three creeds by the Albanian people, Turkish only being taught in the Moslem schools; in the Roman Catholic, Italian; and in the Orthodox Christian, Greek. The only section of the Albanians who can boast of any degree of culture are the Khams, and even this is not indigenous, but is borrowed entirely from the Epirote Greeks of Ioannina and its neighbourhood.

871 The education of the vast majority of Albanian
565 girls, whether Moslem or Christian, is of a purely
562 domestic character, and, with the exception of a small number of Gheg and Tosk maidens of the better class, who are taught a little reading and writing and a great deal of etiquette by old lady *hodjas*, they are entirely unlettered. From the age of twelve to the
562 time of their marriage, which generally takes place
571 before they are sixteen, both Moslem and Christian
868 girls are condemned to complete seclusion from the outer world. The customs of the Christians in this respect are, indeed, more rigid than those of the Moslems, for their daughters are not, during this interval, allowed to present themselves before visitors even of their own sex. Time is not, however, allowed to hang heavily upon the hands of these maidens, whatever their position and prospects. Besides taking an active part in all household duties, there is the important task to accomplish of getting ready her trousseau, and this involves the spinning, weaving, sewing, and embroidering of the various stuffs, cotton, linen, woollen, and silken, of which it is to be composed.

369
562 The peasant and country girls generally, both of

PEAKS OF SHALA

ooo above them, and here and there snow drifts flung up among smoky-gray clouds. Thirty-two waterfalls I counted from that window, veining the mountains with wandering streaks of silver.
● 87| But our gaze came back and fastened upon the school.

"I didn't know they had one in the mountains!" exclaimed Alex, thinking of her Mountain School Fund. "I thought our school at Thethis would be the first one!"

"Padre Marjan certainly said so when he walked down to ask us for it," said Frances.

"Perhaps this isn't a school," said I. Though it looked like one, the little square stone house through whose open doorway we saw rows of
[291] benches, and boys sitting on them, barefooted, wearing the long, tight, white trousers braided with black that hang low on the hip bones, the gorgeous sashes, and the short black jackets thick with fringe, that were white centuries ago, but were changed to mourning when Scanderbeg died for Albanian liberty.

It was a school. The pale, meek priest[1] in black, who is the bishop's ecclesiastical household, showed it to us with pride; he is the teacher.
178 The Turks and the Austrians had blocked all
87| attempts to bring schools into the mountains, he said, and the people, not knowing that schools existed, were naturally not eager to have them. But now the Land of the Eagle was said to be free, after so many centuries of Turkish rule in the valleys, and refugee children who had fled

[1] [bishop of Pultit --Analyst] [34]

PEAKS OF SHALA

before the Serbs were coming back to their tribes and telling about the American school in Scutari, so that all the people wanted their children to learn to read and write. The chiefs themselves, hearing that there was a Tirana government, and not being able to write or read letters about it, or to learn from newspapers (oh, simple-minded, mediæval people!) the truth about European politics, saw what education meant.

The people had taken rocks from the mountains and made the schoolhouse. They had cut precious trees and made the benches and the desks. They had made a slate of a slab of the native rock, set in a rough wooden frame; they wrote upon it with softer rocks. From Italy, across the Adriatic to Durazzo, up to Tirana, to Scutari, and into the mountains—a two weeks' journey by donkey and river ferry—the bishop had got three copy books and a bottle of ink. Pens had been made from twigs. The priest had one book printed in Albanian.

Since the boys must herd the flocks in the mountains, they could not spend the day in school. There is so little land that the goats and sheep are fed from trees. The shepherd climbs a tree, carefully cuts the tender branches, and throws them down to the nibbling beasts that eat the young buds and strip off the juicy bark. There is no tree in all the mountains that the shepherds have not climbed; not a tree that is not a branchless, gnarled trunk.

So the school was open from six to nine in the

PEAKS OF SHALA

• 871 mornings, and the boys came to it, some from ten, twelve, fifteen miles away, and after school they walked back again and took out the flocks. The school had been open six weeks; already the copy books were half filled with beautiful, neat writing, and the boys not only read easily from their one book, but had no difficulty with sentences that Perolli wrote on the slate.

I asked the priest what I could send him from Paris, and his eyes filled with tears as he asked, hesitating a little for fear it was too much, if I could send just a little white paper and half a dozen pencils. The ink was almost gone; they could make more from berries, but he would like the boys to see pencils and learn how to use them. And, of course, when the two copy books were filled, there would be no more paper.

ooo Returning from the dusky schoolroom through the gray slant of the rain, we found in the bishop's house the most handsome man we had [291] yet seen. Tall and lithe, wearing the tight black jacket, scarlet sash, and snowy woolen trousers braided in black, he amazed us by his animal beauty and grace. His silver chain was of the finest pattern, a ring was on a hand that might have been perfectly gloved on Fifth Avenue, and his quiet air of the aristocrat would have made him remarkable in any company. Beside him was a manly little boy perhaps seven years old. He wore with the same grace a miniature copy of the mountain costume. His manners were perfection of grave courtesy, his eyes were

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

carried tied around his waist in a pouch of goat's skin. He put them carefully into our hands, and we tried to return the gift with some pieces of hoarded candy. But he gazed in dismay at the strange things, and nothing would persuade him to taste them. A colored handkerchief, however, was accepted in an ecstasy that made him dumb; he could only lay it upon his heart and touch our hands to his forehead. Another chief came with a fat hen, others with eggs; all were eager to roll cigarettes for us, all were smiling, and in a hundred beautiful phrases they overwhelmed us with thanks for our coming, for our presence, for the school that Alex and Frances had promised Thethis. For this was to be the first of the mountain schools, and Alex, who had come into the mountains to decide where to put the other two, was delighted to learn that already, before the school building was begun, Padre Marjan had started the school, and Lulash had promised a hundred trees to be burned to make lime for the building.

We sat talking of these things while Padre Marjan set pots of soup to boiling in the fireplace, broke eggs, unlocked his box of precious flour, busied himself with all preparations for dinner, climbing over and around the tangle of lounging bodies, until another outbreak of echoing noises announced the arrival of Frances and Perolli and Rexh and our men with the packs. We felt a little tension with Perolli's arrival, seeing the keen eyes of the men fixed on his English

PEAKS OF SHALA

000 We were awakened in the damp chill of a watery gray dawn, and with surprise found ourselves on its unfamiliar softness, in the bleak room of unpainted boards. Padre Marjan was knocking at the door. In a moment he entered, barefooted, in his long brown robe girded with cord, and, going to the incongruous office desk, he carefully unlocked a lower drawer and took out a box of soap. There were twenty small cakes of soap in the box. He took out one, carefully, put the box back in the drawer, locked it.

871 He had been followed by a small boy, a very
861 serious child, and visibly nervous. About eleven years old, he wore the long, tight, black-braided white trousers, colored sash, and woolly, fringed short black jacket of his people, but they were all soaking wet and very old, mended and mended again until hardly any of the original fabric was left. His bare feet were blue with cold, and so were his bare arms, for the Scanderbeg jacket has no sleeves, and he did not wear a shirt. He stood very straight, and swallowed hard, keeping his face impassive.

Padre Marjan turned to him, holding the cake of soap. He spoke earnestly and at some little length. He then presented the cake of soap to the child, who bent a knee to receive it, and kissed the padre's hand and then the soap. An impressive little ceremonial, which we witnessed, wide eyed, from the mattress where we sat huddled among the blankets. Rain was still sluicing

1 [Padre Marjan of Thethis -- [134] Analyst]

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

against the windows, so that the water on them was surely as thick as the glass.

We looked inquiringly at Frances, who understood Albanian. Her eyes shone, she was so excited. "It's a school prize!" she said, and, listening, "He's the best scholar in school; already he can read and write. Isn't it splendid!" The boy saluted us gravely; one saw that he had just gone through a profound emotional experience. "Long may you live!" said he, and went out.

Padre Marjan said that the school had been opened ten days before. On the first day there were forty-three pupils, on the second day sixty-two, on the third day ninety-seven. All the tribe was sending its children to live with relatives in Thethis and go to school. No more than ninety-seven could get into the padre's living room; the others must wait until, with the money Alex and Frances had collected, the schoolhouse could be built. There were no benches or desks, of course; the children stood packed tightly in the cold room, and he taught them by writing with a piece of chalk on the walls. Already this boy could read and write words of one syllable and merited a cake of soap. Padre Marjan, at his own expense, had sent two hundred miles to Tirana for fifty cakes of soap, to be used as prizes. There was, of course, no other soap in the tribe; a more magnificent gift could not have been imagined.

The boy who got the cake of soap walked

PEAKS OF SHALA

871 The boy who got the cake of soap walked
every morning nine miles over the mountains to
[857] reach school at seven o'clock, and at nine, after school, he walked back and took out the goats and spent all day climbing trees and cutting twigs for them to eat.

Padre Marjan said that as soon as he knew the Americans would build the school he had started teaching, and he had written to the government in Tirana and asked if it would help. He brought from the desk the letter he had received in reply. Written by hand, for the poverty-stricken young government had no typewriters, and sent by messenger into the mountains, in six weeks it had reached Thethis, and the padre kept it wrapped in a bit of hand-woven silk. Frances spelled it out; it said that the government would give a hundred kronen a month to pay the teacher. It was signed for the Minister of the Interior by Rrok Perolli.

ooo "My sainted grandmother!" cried Frances. "Where is Perolli?" At that very minute the chiefs might be sending word to the Serbs to come and get him. The chiefs themselves would surely not violate the hospitality of their priest, but the Serbs would have no reverence for it and they were only a few miles away. When we thought what a bargain the chiefs might drive with the Serbs for Perolli it seemed too much to hope that one of them, at least, would not hand him over.

Padre Marjan spoke warmly of Perolli, whom he had so innocently betrayed; he said that he

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

the byraktor that Shala had sworn a *besa* with the Tirana government, and then thought best not venture into mazes that I did not understand. But the byraktor was greatly interested on learning that I had been in Montenegro, and all that I knew about that part of Jugo-Slavia I told him; it was very little, but he seemed to see more than I did in the robbery of the Serbian Minister of Finance by Montenegrin bandits.

"The story was in the newspapers," I told him. "Some day there will be newspapers in Albania, and schools in the mountains, and then you will learn about these things when they happen."

"I have heard about the school in Thethis," he answered. "Schools are very good, but what my people need is food and clothes. We are very poor. We have too little land. A school is of no use to a child who is hungry, for hunger has no brains with which to learn. I do not care for a school in Shoshi until all my people have enough bread. It is not right to give the well-fed child a school, too; he has already more than other children, and the school will only make him wiser and prouder than the poorer ones. Already the families with fewer children are stronger than those with many, and that is not right. I do not want a school; I want land for my people, for food comes from land, and after food comes the school. There is no hope for the mountain people while enemies hold our valleys. First the Romans, then the Turks, then the

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

POSTSCRIPT

France—who had got Rexh into the American school, handicapped though he was with lack of schooling and with his Gheg tongue, and he had worked hard to justify her commendation.

"I do my best, Mrs. Lane. At first I was very stupid, for I could not understand the Toshk boys, and I could not understand the teachers when they asked me questions, and I was two years behind with the books. But now they speak English, and I have learned Toshk. So I am happy, and my report card is very good. I would like to show you my next one. Now that you have come, I have some one to show it to. It is a joke on me, because, though you said you would come back, I did not think you ever would. And aren't you happy to find the school really here?"

For we had talked a great deal about the school, a year before when it was only a plan and a hope. Of all the work done by American children in Europe, this school is most beautiful to me. It was not much the Junior Red Cross did in Albania—only a few months of Frances Hardy's house for refugee children in Scutari, only a little medical work that stopped too soon—but it did build the Vocational School, and Albania will never forget it. Half of the country's little income goes for the 1,100 schools started since 1912, but none of them can be equipped or staffed like the Vocational School. It opened in July, with sixty boys to learn English. For there are no technical books writ-

POSTSCRIPT

ten in Albanian, and Albanian was the only language the boys knew. Three months later they were speaking, reading, and writing English, and the first school year began. In March, when we came to Tirana, they were the finest upstanding lot of youngsters that ever made a teacher proud, and our arrival was celebrated by an evening's entertainment, for which the boys extemporized little plays in English, political parodies so witty that they brought tears of mirth to the eyes. I do not think the record of those boys is equaled anywhere, and to find Rexh among them was the happy ending to the story.

"And now Ahmet Bey is Minister of the Interior! Who is chief of the Mati, then?"

"His mother is chief when he is away, Mrs. Lane."

"Is he a good Minister of the Interior?"

"He works very hard. I think he did not have much schooling. He came from the court of Abdul Hamid when he was sixteen—you remember the *comitadj* told you—and he has been fighting ever since. He came to Tirana last December when there was the strike."

"No, Rexh! A strike? In Tirana?"

"It is a long story, Mrs. Lane. If you would have a coffee with me, I would tell it all."

We left the others wandering down the Durazzo road and back, and sat at a little table beneath a plane tree by the white arches of the café. A waiter brought us cups of Turkish coffee, and while the crowd went slowly past us

[Constitution]

ARTICLE 26

The state takes care of the physical education of the people, especially that of the youth, with a view to improving health and increasing the capacity of the people for work and the defense of the state. 657

ARTICLE 27

Freedom of scientific and artistic work is guaranteed. 517
The state promotes science and the arts in such a way as to further the culture and welfare of the public.

The rights of authors are protected by law.

ARTICLE 28

In order to raise the cultural level, the state gives to all classes of people every chance to attend schools and other cultural institutions. 871

The state is particularly interested in the education of youth.

Minors are protected by law. [858]

The schools belong to the state. Private schools can be opened only by special permission. All their activities are supervised by the state. Elementary education is free and obligatory.

Schools are separated from the church.

ARTICLE 29

Citizens have the right to petition state organs for redress of wrongs. 641

Citizens have the right to complain against any illegal or irregular decision of an administrative organ of the state.

ARTICLE 30

Every citizen can complain in competent courts against officials who have acted unjustly in the discharge of their duty.

ARTICLE 31

Citizens are entitled to seek from the state or from an official compensation for damages incurred as a result of illegal or irregular punishment. 695

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania EG1

I Go a-Missionising

it might be renewed. I had a most uncomfortable night in a bedroom with three beds, of which two were occupied by Albanians who slept in their clothes and snored. The third bed I shared with a host of predatory creatures who seemed to have been fasting for months in anticipation of my arrival. At five the next morning, when I had sunk from sheer exhaustion into a fitful slumber, I was aroused by the other two men getting up, and saw my late antagonists, bloated and swollen with their feast, slowly climbing the wall. Even at eight there were still a few stragglers toiling painfully homewards—the rearguard of the victorious army.

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797

The Missionary School is a private philanthropic concern, not as yet under the U.S. Missionary Board. It has been kept going, in the face of many difficulties, practically continuously since 1908. The Greeks, who were at that time in power, knowing that their treatment of the Albanian people was not likely to increase their prestige in either Great Britain or America, had no desire that an American should be a witness of it, and threw every possible obstacle in the way of the establishment of the school. It speaks highly for Mr. Kennedy's persistence that in spite of this he succeeded in his endeavour. The school is strictly non-sectarian and at the present time is attended by a large number of scholars, both Christian and Mohammedan.

On the afternoon of the Sunday which I spent at Koritza we went out a-missionising. A conveyance of the buggy type took us to a village in the plain which offered I suppose, a promising field. The journey was not speedy,

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2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania EG1

The Education Question

was due to the fact that Albania had for such a great part of its existence been a subject race. Under Turkish domination the Turkish language was made compulsory and was taught in the schools, and Albanian books were confiscated. The Turks were followed by the Greeks, who were even more bitter against the printing of Albanian and subjected every

THE NEW SHOES

house to a rigorous search and burned every Albanian book that had escaped the Turks. Asking about education, I was told that it is only very lately that the country has had a chance of settling down and attending to this very important matter. During the war it was occupied at different times by the Austrians, the Italians, and the French, and education, like everything else, was in a state of chaos. Now, however,

2:Edmonds T-3 (1926?) 1927 E13 Balkan Peoples
Albania E61

To the Land of the Eagle

871 there is an improvement, and in the principal towns there are [562] not only schools for boys but schools for girls also. The villagers, however, with the aversion from change and progress which is characteristic of the peasant in all countries, oppose the education of the girls. What do they want with education? Is it not their job to attend to the house, to work in the fields, to wait on their lords and masters and to bear them children? So say these village folk,—and I seem to have heard arguments on the education question, in essentials exactly the same though perhaps not quite so crudely put, uttered by persons in a certain civilised country who ought to know better.

362 During my stay in Koritza I explored the town thoroughly The Mohammedan quarter swarms with children—quaint little creatures in all sorts of garments, the girls for the most part wearing the orthodox Turkish trousers. They seem happy enough, though dirty. The Christian section of the town does not lag behind the Mohammedan in this particular, and there are no signs whatever of a decreasing birth-rate. As you walk along the rather narrow streets, open and half-open doorways give glimpses of shady courtyards where women sit spinning and sewing and nursing their babies. There are plants in tubs, and trellises, and vines, and always a pump to supply the household with water, for Koritza is proud of its water, which is very pure and fresh. In the business parts crowds of men fill the streets, and they carry all sorts of things—fish on a string, the entrails of sheep, dead mutton, live kids, the raw pelts of goats and cattle,